

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA**

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILING COMPLAINT BY PRISONER UNDER  
CIVIL RIGHTS ACT, 42 U.S.C. § 1983**

1. This complaint must be legibly handwritten or typewritten and signed by the plaintiff. Any false statement of material fact may serve as the basis for prosecution and conviction for perjury. All questions must be answered concisely in the proper space on the form.
2. This packet includes three (3) copies of a complaint form and one (1) copy of an *in forma pauperis* affidavit.
3. In order for this complaint to be filed, it must be accompanied by the **filing fee of \$350.00** (28 U.S.C. § 1914(a)) and a **\$50.00 administrative fee**. If you do not have the necessary filing fee, you may request permission to proceed *in forma pauperis*. Please complete the enclosed affidavit setting forth information establishing your inability to prepay the fees and costs.
4. When these forms are complete, they must be mailed to the Clerk of the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia. The address is listed below:

United States District Court  
Eastern District of Virginia  
701 East Broad Street  
Suite 3000  
Richmond, Virginia 23219-3528

5. Complaints that do not conform to these instructions will be returned with a notation as to the deficiency.
6. **ALL COPIES OF THE COMPLAINT MUST BE IDENTICAL. DO NOT MAIL THE FORMS TO A SPECIFIC JUDGE.**

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA**

**COMPLAINT UNDER CIVIL RIGHTS ACT 42 U.S.C. § 1983**

**Action Number** \_\_\_\_\_  
(To be supplied by the Clerk, U.S. District Court)

Please fill out this complaint form completely. The Court needs the information requested in order to assure that your complaint is processed as quickly as possible and that all your claims are addressed. Please print/write legibly or type.

**I. PARTIES**

**A. Plaintiff:**

1. (a) \_\_\_\_\_ (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) (Inmate number)
- (c) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Address)
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Plaintiff MUST keep the Clerk of Court notified of any change of address due to transfer or release. If plaintiff fails to keep the Clerk informed of such changes, this action may be dismissed.**

**Plaintiff is advised that only persons acting under the color of state law are proper defendants under Section 1983. The Commonwealth of Virginia is immune under the Eleventh Amendment. Private parties such as attorneys and other inmates may not be sued under Section 1983. In addition, liability under Section 1983 requires personal action by the defendant that caused you harm. Normally, the Director of the Department of Corrections, wardens, and sheriffs are not liable under Section 1983 when a claim against them rests solely on the fact that they supervise persons who may have violated your rights. In addition, prisons, jails, and departments within an institution are not persons under Section 1983.**

**B. Defendant(s):**

1. (a) \_\_\_\_\_ (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) (Title/Job Description)
- (c) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Address)
- \_\_\_\_\_

2. (a) \_\_\_\_\_ (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) (Title/Job Description)

(c) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Address)

\_\_\_\_\_

3. (a) \_\_\_\_\_ (b) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name) (Title/Job Description)

(c) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Address)

\_\_\_\_\_

If there are additional defendants, please list them on a separate sheet of paper. Provide all identifying information for each defendant named.

**Plaintiff MUST provide a physical address for defendant(s) in order for the Court to serve the complaint. If plaintiff does not provide a physical address for a defendant, that person may be dismissed as a party to this action.**

## II. PREVIOUS LAWSUITS

A. Have you ever begun other lawsuits in any state or federal court relating to your imprisonment? Yes [ ] No [ ]

B. If your answer to "A" is Yes: You must describe any lawsuit, whether currently pending or closed, in the space below. If there is more than one lawsuit, you must describe each lawsuit on another sheet of paper, using the same outline, and attach hereto.

1. Parties to previous lawsuit:

Plaintiff(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Defendant(s) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Court (if federal court, name the district; if state court, name the county):

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Date lawsuit filed: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Docket number: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Name of Judge to whom case was assigned: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Disposition (Was case dismissed? Appealed? Is it still pending? What relief was granted, if any?) : \_\_\_\_\_

### **III. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

A. At what institution did the events concerning your current complaint take place: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Does the institution listed in "A" have a grievance procedure? Yes [ ☐ ] No [ ☐ ]

C. If your answer to "B" is Yes:

1. Did you file a grievance based on this complaint? Yes [ ☐ ] No [ ☐ ]

2. If so, where and when: \_\_\_\_\_

3. What was the result? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Did you appeal? Yes [ ☐ ] No [ ☐ ]

5. Result of appeal: \_\_\_\_\_

D. If there was no prison grievance procedure in the institution, did you complain to the prison authorities? Yes [ ☐ ] No [ ☐ ]

If your answer is Yes, what steps did you take? \_\_\_\_\_

E. If your answer is No, explain why you did not submit your complaint to the prison authorities:

#### IV. STATEMENT OF THE CLAIM

State here the facts of your case. Describe how each defendant is involved and how you were harmed by their action. Also include the dates, places of events, and constitutional amendments you allege were violated.

If you intend to allege several related claims, number and set forth each claim in a separate paragraph. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

[illegible]

## **V. RELIEF**

I understand that in a Section 1983 action the Court cannot change my sentence, release me from custody or restore good time. I understand I should file a petition for a writ of habeas corpus if I desire this type of relief. \_\_\_\_\_ (please initial)

The plaintiff wants the Court to: (check those remedies you seek)

\_\_\_\_\_ Award money damages in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Grant injunctive relief by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## **VI. PLACES OF INCARCERATION**

Please list the institutions at which you were incarcerated during the last six months. If you were transferred during this period, list the date(s) of transfer. Provide an address for each institution.

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## **VII. CONSENT**

CONSENT TO TRIAL BY A MAGISTRATE JUDGE: The parties are advised of their right, pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(c), to have a U.S. Magistrate Judge preside over a trial, with appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit.

**Do you consent to proceed before a U.S. Magistrate Judge:** Yes [ ☐ ] No [ ☐ ]. You may consent at any time; however, an early consent is encouraged.

## **VIII. SIGNATURE**

If there is more than one plaintiff, each plaintiff must sign for himself or herself.

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

Plaintiff \_\_\_\_\_